

New Hampshire
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Tips for Buying Meat from Door to Door Sellers

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The timesaving convenience of shopping at home has become more popular. It can also be expensive if you don't know what to look for. Many factors play a role when considering the purchase of meat, seafood and poultry from someone who comes to your door, so remember the following tips:

7 Things to Check Before You Buy

1) Selling by the piece is illegal. Buy meat, seafood and poultry by SERVING or WEIGHT and NOT BY THE BOX. Make sure that the seller's price list has a stated price per pound for each product.

2) Read the label on the package or carton before you buy. USDA inspected products are required to give information about the product on the label. On raw products, the species, the cut, the net weight, the ingredients statement and the safe handling statement are required. No ingredient may be added to fresh meat or poultry unless the ingredient is listed on the label. Some companies may offer less tender cuts, or lower grades of meat or poultry for lower prices because the product has been tenderized with a marinade or /flavoring agent.

3) Get a WRITTEN agreement!

Whenever considering the purchase of products from a door-to-door seller, find out who they are. In New Hampshire, it is required that, at the time of sale, the seller must provide the buyer with a written agreement. The written agreement must clearly disclose the following information:

- The name, address, and telephone number of the seller and the name and address of the buyer;
- The date of the contract;
- A list of all food and nonfood items to be sold and:
 - **The identity of each unit and the United States Department of Agriculture quality grade of the item.**
 - **The quantity of each item sold**, including estimated serving size by net weight of each piece of meat, poultry, and seafood item offered for sale.
 - **A current unit price list** stating in dollars and cents the price per kilogram or pound and the total sale price of each item delivered. The price list shall clearly refer to the fact of whether there are additional costs disclosed in the written agreement relating to any "service charges" associated with the purchase.
 - **The right of cancellation** which is a statement that the buyer shall have the right to cancel the contract until midnight of the third day after the date on which the buyer executed the contract or after the day on which the seller provided the buyer with a fully executed copy of the contract, whichever is later, by giving written notice of cancellation to the seller.

4) BEWARE OF SELLERS WHO SAY, "Grocery stores charge for the packaging material on the products they sell, but door-to-door sellers are not required to." This is UNTRUE!!!

The fact is all retailers are required to deduct the weight of the packaging material (tare) from the cost of the product. Consumers should only pay for the product within the package and NEVER the material it comes in.

5) Always check to be sure the product has been stored in a refrigerated vehicle. Never buy meat or poultry products that are transported in an unrefrigerated truck or car trunk.

6) GET A DELIVERY RECEIPT

The following is what is required on a receipt:

- The name and address of the buyer and seller;
- The delivery date;
- The total weight of the product delivered;
- A list, by name and count of each cut;
- A separate indication of the quantity of any meat or other commodity received by the purchaser;
- The right of cancellation.

7) If you have a complaint about the company, try to resolve your dispute with the seller first. Make sure you act quickly. Send a letter of complaint to the company. Be sure you keep a copy for your records. A letter is important because it puts your complaint on record and lets the company know you are serious about pursuing the dispute. In general, beware of claims that are too good to be true. They usually are.

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